

BOOK REVIEWS

MUTILATING INJURIES OF THE HAND, Second Edition—Edited by D. A. Campbell Reid, MB, BS, FFRCS, and R. Tubiana, in collaboration with 37 authors. Churchill Livingstone Inc, 1560 Broadway, New York, NY 10036, 1984. 212 pages, \$55.

This monograph is one of a series sponsored by the Groupe D'Etude de la Main (GEM), and many of the chapters are based on papers originally written in French. In addition to the 26 French authors, there are 6 from Australia and others from England, India, Israel, Switzerland and Brazil. All are very experienced in the management of hand injuries.

The contents are divided into two parts: Primary treatment and secondary management of mutilated hands. Part I has seven chapters involving primary treatment, skin cover, unstable finger injuries, amputations and replantation procedures. Particular emphasis is placed on the importance of providing skin with normal sensibility on tactile surfaces. Part II has 26 chapters discussing digital transfers after amputation, phalangisation of metacarpals, distraction-lengthening techniques, microsurgical transfers, thumb reconstruction, the Krunkenberg operation, treatment of painful neuromata and amputation stumps, sensory flaps for the degloved hand, functional appliances, cosmetic prostheses, the results and postoperative management, reeducation and psychological problems in mutilating injuries.

The papers provide an excellent balance between proved techniques and developing expertise, such as microsurgery. The book will appeal to hand surgeons, orthopedic surgeons, plastic surgeons, physical therapists, occupational therapists, hand therapists, emergency room personnel and all other professionals called upon to treat these challenging cases. This revised second edition has been expanded to provide greater technical detail in this special surgical field.

GEORGE E. OMER, MD
Professor and Chair
Department of Orthopaedics and
Rehabilitation
University of New Mexico
School of Medicine
Albuquerque

* * *

HOW TO SURVIVE MEDICAL SCHOOL—Toni Martin, MD. Penguin Books, 40 W 23rd St, New York, NY 10010, 1984. 180 pages, \$5.95 U.S.A., \$6.95 CAN (paperback).

How to Survive Medical School is an accurate and sensitive account of the emotional, physical and educational ups and downs of medical training. The author, Dr Toni Martin, recently completed her training in internal medicine at the University of California, San Francisco. All medical students and residents should identify with Dr Martin's experiences and reactions.

Written in a conversational tone, this book is short and easily read in one or two sittings. It deals with all aspects of medical education. There is a chapter devoted to each year, beginning with the application period and ending with the residency years. Additionally, there are two excellent chapters titled "The Real World" and "The Real World Revisited," which discuss the impact of medical training on the social and home life of the student.

Dr Martin has written an excellent book. She has recalled her training with perception and humor, but without a pair of rose-colored glasses. Those expecting a reminiscence about the "good old days" will be disappointed. The section on medical school emphasizes the different challenges and frustrations that accompany each year. She describes not only the intimidating curriculum, but also the difficult transition from classroom learning to wards learning. She recalls the uncertainty of the third-year student who must figure out her role in relation to the housestaff and the patients. The author discusses the difficulty of reconciling the uneasiness felt by the student when practicing on people with the need for a "hands on" education. Her section on residency is equally insightful. She tells of the fatigue and depression of an intern and the fear of a resident suddenly faced with the responsibility of a ward team.

Dr Martin has certainly given a fair amount of time to relating the positive aspects of training. Anecdotes appear throughout the book which show her new found (and hard earned) knowledge, competence and confidence. All of us can relate to the sense of accomplishment felt by the third-year student starting her first intravenous line, the intern managing her first case of pulmonary edema and the resident successfully running her first Code Blue.

Throughout the book, the author emphasizes the great impact that training has on interpersonal relationships both in and out of the hospital. She briefly touches on the prejudices that still exist for women and nonwhite physicians.

I recommend this realistic account of medical education for physicians at

all levels. For premedical students, it may be disillusioning but should help them bring a set of reasonable expectations to medical school. This book may remind older physicians about the stresses under which their students are working. Most important, for physicians in training this book is comforting. It is reassuring to realize that the myriad of doubts and frustrations that accompany training today have been experienced by people who are currently enjoying their medical careers.

CATHERINE REINIS, MD
Medical Resident III
University of California
San Francisco

* * *

RICHARD LOWER'S VINDICATIO—A DEFENCE OF THE EXPERIMENTAL METHOD—A facsimile introduced and edited by Kenneth Dewhurst, MD, FRHistS. Sandford Publications, Manor House, Sandford-on-Thames, Oxford, United Kingdom OX4 4YN, 1983. 314 pages, price: 12 English Pounds, limited to 250 numbered and signed copies.

It has been my pleasure on several previous occasions to review books by Kenneth Dewhurst, MD, of Oxford University. Like the book here reviewed, Professor Dewhurst's writings generally are concerned with the history of British medical and biological research of the 16th and 17th centuries and deal with the evolution of medical ideas and practices, rather than with the personal lives of individual physicians.

In this book, which follows the author's *Thomas Willis's Oxford Lectures* (Oxford, 1980) and *Willis's Oxford Casebook* (Oxford, 1981), Dewhurst reveals such familiarity with the concerns and interactions of the British physicians of the 17th century that it almost appears as if he had lived among them at that time. As the title and introduction indicate, there was an unending and unsparing flow of arguments, doubts and denials among medical colleagues about each other's theories and discoveries.

The subject matter of this book is again a work by Thomas Willis, *Treatise on Fevers*, which had been unmercifully criticized by a number of contemporary physicians but by none as fiercely as by the Irishman Edmund O'Meara. The fevers, discussed but not identified by Willis, are believed to have been the various epidemic fevers of the middle of the 17th century, such as purulent meningitis of which there was an epidemic in 1658 and encephalitis lethargica, an epidemic fever of 1661. There also were the various forms of intermittent fevers. Willis was able to write so authoritatively about these diseases because—as a very busy practitioner—he had much experience with a variety of patients suffering from these diseases.

It was logical that Richard Lower, who had been Willis's student and assistant, came to the defense of his teacher and wrote a *Vindictio*, or justification, of Willis's work on fevers together with *A Defense of the Experimental Method*. It was this experimental method, largely derived from animal experimentation, that was rejected by O'Meara. Even though the latter's description of the nature and pathology of the blood flow and vascular infarctions was correct and remarkably insightful, Lower, on one occasion, permitted himself to describe O'Meara as a "market quack."

O'Meara, the vociferous doubter of Willis's findings on fevers and fermentation, derived his power of conviction from his disbelief in Harvey's theory of the circulation of the blood. Another of his strong and unassailable prejudices was his distaste of all animal experimentation, because vivisection was seen by him purely as "terrible tortures." Any experimental evidence that contradicted his own ideas was disregarded by O'Meara.

All these developments and hostilities are beautifully detailed in Professor Dewhurst's introduction to this book. And to add fuel to the fire of dissension, a 194-page facsimile edition of the entire original Latin text of Richard Lower's justification of Thomas Willis's *Treatise on Fevers*, directed against Edmund O'Meara, is inserted in the center of the book.

This facsimile edition of Lower's defense of Willis's *Treatise on Fevers* makes Dewhurst's work doubly valuable, for not only can the reader compare Willis's own words which Lower so valiantly defends, but it also makes available complete copies of Lower's *Vindictio* which cannot be obtained in any other fashion as the *Vindictio* is one of the very rare books of medical history. It probably is as a means of preserving this rarity that the book here reviewed was published in a limited edition of 250 numbered and signed copies. Hence, even on purchasing a new volume of this interesting and learned volume, the modern physician will obtain a collector's item that will soon be irreplaceable.

ILZA VEITH, PhD, DmedSci
Professor Emeritus
Departments of Psychiatry and
History of Health Sciences
University of California, San Francisco